

VOL. 8 No. 6 NOV. DEC. 1980



# ON THE AIR



PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY by the GOLDEN RADIO BUFFS OF MARYLAND, INC.



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# • ON THE AIR •

A PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN RADIO BUFFS OF MARYLAND, INC. FOUNDED 1971

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We wish to thank the following people, organizations and publications, for contributing articles appearing in this issue of "ON THE AIR": The Sunpapers, The News American, Variety, The Pratt Library, The Big Band Society of Md., The Vintage Record Society of Baltimore, Radio Stations WAYF and WRBS, The Indiana Old-Time Radio and Recording Club, and Mr. John Hickman of WAMU's "RECOLLECTIONS" show.

## \* CLASSIFIED \*

### SOMETHING SPECIAL!

Now available to all GRB members, OUR own wall and desk 10th Anniversary appointment calendar. \$2.50 each.

The Old-Time Radio Crossword Puzzle and Game Book. 100 Old-Time Radio Crosswords, puzzles, and game quizzes. \$4.00 each. Fill out the slip below and mail to:

Something Special  
c/o ON THE AIR  
3613 Chestnut Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21211

### PLEASE SEND THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

Appointment Calendar: \$2.50 each

Game Book: \$4.00 each

Total amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

GRB # \_\_\_\_\_

# - GRB MEETING -

NOV. 15, 7:30 P.M. ST MATHIAS HALL  
6400 BELAIR RD. (NEXT TO DUNKIN' DONUTS)

1 MI SOUTH OF BELTWAY- EXIT 32 % BELAIR RD. (RT. # 1  
LIGHTED PARKING LOT- GROUND LEVEL ENTRANCE- NO STEPS.

MTA BUS #15 DROPS YOU AT THE FRONT DOOR.

- "SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES"  
- BIG BAND MOVIES- OLD-TIME RADIO- DISPLAYS- SKITS-  
- DUMPKIN PIE, APPLES & CIDER-

DANCE TO THE MUSIC OF

*Tommy Dorsey Orchestra*  
UNDER DIRECTION OF BUDDY MORROW  
DOWNTOWN

WED. NOV. 26, 8:00 P.M. HILTON  
FAYETTE & BALTIMORE STS.

\$12.50 PER PERSON  
CALL WAYE 547-8666  
BY RESERVATION ONLY !!  
ANOTHER "BIGGY" FROM BIG BAND 86

HAVE A DIFFERENT LUNCH  
TRY OUR

BLUE PLATE SPECIAL

SERVED  
AT  
NOON

ON W A Y E  
BIG BAND  
86

PLEASE TEAR-OFF AND POST.

## • EDITORIAL •

### "A NEW BEGINNING"

With this issue of our newsletter, we bring you an entirely new Editorial staff. We have a new editor, a new typist and a new press. We also have three new writers; Guy Travers, Richard Owellen, and Rae Deo. Although we have had an excellent newsletter in the past, and your editor and his staff did an outstanding job, we felt that there was room for improvement needed in keeping in line with the Old-Time Radio format, which were the guide lines of this newsletter as well as our club, since it's founding in 1972. Therefore we make this pledge to you that all future issues of this publication will be dedicated solely to the purpose of promoting and preserving Old-Time Radio listening and reading. Each and every article that appears in this and every issue of "ON THE AIR" from here on out will be about Old Time Radio (Or) radio-related material both past and present. We are confident in the fact that we have what we feel, and has been considered by many both in the Radio Industry and out, one of the finest newsletters devoted to vintage radio in the entire United States. Being one of the oldest vintage radio clubs in the country, other clubs, upon their founding have used our format of vintage reporting as the basis of their own newsletters. We consider this an honor and shall continue to be worthy of their praise and publish a class

"A" newsletter for you, our members. Remember this is your newsletter and we invite your comments, vintage articles, vintage radio logs, pictures (B & W), ads, clippings, or anything of interest about Old-time Radio.

Respectfully,  
Owens Pomeroy, Editor  
"ON THE AIR"

### BOARD OF GOVERNORS' YEAR-END REPORT: - NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS-

Now is the time of year we all start thinking about New Years Resolutions and next month at this time is when we will start breeding them.

One of the comments your Board has received on the negative side is that our newsletter did not contain enough vintage radio material, and that it was not "folksy" enough. We have now hopefully, rearranged our format and will include vintage news more along a "folksy" line.

Our decision was, that the more "Folksy" the newsletter the more one would not feel his writings would be out of place within the newsletter and thus he would be encouraged to write. Another decision, and perhaps the most important was that it gives us, and hopefully you, a closer association with each other. We now have the paper, the space and the duplicating facilities and will aim "ON THE AIR" in the direction of a good Nostalgia newsletter.

Respectfully,  
Your Board of Governors





## AIRWAVES

By: Gene

A great article in The Sunday Sun about the career of Galen Fromme. Hurrahs to Dorothy E. Brunson owner of WBBB Radio (1360 AM). Dot has been in "radio" broadcasting for close to 20 years. She moved from accountant to co-op advertising department employee for W. T. GRANT stores in New York to radio station owner here in Charm City. (More Later). You've come a long way baby! Ever wonder how WCBM's LEE CASE got the Morning Mayor Title? It stemmed from the time when CHARLIE ECKMAN was a WCBM sportscaster. "I called Charlie 'King', and he called me 'Mayor', Lee says "and that's how it began". Lee has hosted the WCBM Morning show (5:00-9:00 A.M.) since 1957, making him one of Baltimore's most enduring radio personalities. Have been seeing DANNY SHERIDAN around town and he's doing well. Two of WFBR's pioneers Jim and Phil Crist are not up to par and would like to hear from their old friends and co-workers. Jim is in Florida and Phil resides in Baltimore. Call me if you would like to get in touch with them. I see where KATE SMITH made a rare appearance, on her front porch, to accept a giant 6x8 foot get well card sent to her Raleigh, N.C. home by truck. This was done in co-operation with "radio station" WIP in Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Flyers Hockey Team. Kate, at 71, has been in poor health for most of the past 4 years and recently recovered from a diabetic coma. This gives food for thought for the GRB members. Any ideas? Frank Sinatra's newest TRILOGY album is getting much radio play. Frank will be 65 this December and in January 1981 he will begin 2 new recording projects-- a jazz album and an album entirely composed of what he lovingly calls "Saloon Songs". The Musical Extravaganza held September 21, 1980 at Shriver Hall J.H.U. was a success, alot of Celebrities and the cream of Baltimore broadcasters took turns M.C.ing i.e. Stu Kerr, Bill LeFevre, Ken Jackson, Chuck Richards, and Guy Travers. All proceeds of the program went to J.H.U. to establish a memorial scholarship fund in loving memory of ROBERT BRAVER-- a teacher and brother of OLIVER BRAVER, Ollie is founder of the Baltimore Vintage Record Club. Band leader RAY ANTHONY is campaigning for a revival of Big Bands to fill the vacuum left by the decline of disco music. The key to success, he believes, is to win over record buying young people and get our country back on the track of the good music sound. September 8th was the 50th birthday of the "BLONDIE" comic strip (thats 18,250 strips) radio station WAYE was recently sold and with listener support they will retain the "BIG BAND SOUNDS", so please support WAYE's advertisers and call or write the station and let them know the Baltimore area wants and needs the great sounds that emanate from Big Band 86. Got a Christmas dance coming your way on December 20th--hope to see all members there (see flyer enclosed). GEORGE BURNS calls his upcoming TV tribute to Jack Benny "The most

### AIRWAVES--Continued

cherished show of my career". NBC is planning to air "A LOVE LETTER TO JACK BENNY" in February--Valentines Day, which is also Jack's birthday. Bob Hope and Johnny Carson are slated to appear. Our sympathys go out to the families of BETH TURNER HANAUER, wife of the late BERT HANAUER of WFBR and Charlie Roeder a WCBM pioneer. Both passed away this October.

Did you know on June 14, 1922, only six days after going on the air, WEAR (WFBR) created a milestone in broadcasting when it aired President Hardings speech at Fort McHenry in which he dedicated the National Memorial to Francis Scott Key. It marked the first time that Americans had listened by radio to the voice of an American President and was the first radio program that had been broadcast by remote control.

### MEMBERSHIP and CLUB NOTES

Our last bi-monthly meeting was well attended by the regulars and some "new faces". We had pizza and other zoodies. A "radio show" was presented by Owens, Vernon, Allan and myself. This is a one hour program we do at Senior Centers and Homes for the Aged. The members seemed to enjoy it. I'm still looking for more attendance and wish you the members would attend. A lot of planning goes into these meetings and I know you would get to know other members and ourselves better. Next meet is November 15 at 7:30 P.M. and we plan to have an open meeting with movies possible of the big bands. Pumpkin pie and cider will be served. I'll need some help with this one so how about baking a pumpkin pie and attend. Please give me a call at 288-5848 if you will volunteer a pie. Our 1st Christmas Dance, co-sponsored by the Baltimore Vintage Record Club, will be held December 20. Food, live and recorded music, dancing, door prizes and good fellowship will prevail. If the attendance is good this will be an Annual affair and it will help bring in money to our 2 clubs. If you need directions give me a call. Got some information for you: 2 great clubs to join. The Baltimore Vintage Record Club - The purpose of the club is to perpetuate the enjoyment and recognition of the wonderful music of the 20's thru the 40's. 250,000 recordings wait to be discovered by willing ears. Dues \$1.00 per meeting, for information call Oliver Braver 665-8149. WAYE Big Band Society - a club of Big Band Music Lovers. They have Name Orchestra dances, Moonlight Cruises and interesting meetings and newsletters. Dues \$5.00 per person (year), call Radio Station WAYE 547-8666. A very enjoyable and worthwhile club. Speaking of Big Bands here's the latest from WAYE: The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, directed by Buddy Morrow will be playing at the Hilton Downtown for the BB86 dance November 26th--Wednesday night, hope to see you there. Ken Jackson and Chris Emery of WAYE now have a great noontime show called "The Blueplate Special". It features a one hour presentation of a big band, plus information and prizes. Tune in and enjoy.

Our next deadline for the Jan. issue will be Dec.15th,1980.All articles and ads must be in by that date.



## THE SILENT MICROPHONE

GONE, BUT NOT  
FORGOTTEN

Orin Tovrov, wrote scripts for MA PERKINS Radio series, died August 16th.

Norman Shelly, Radio actor, whose imitation of Winston Churchill's voice helped rally U.S. support for Great Britain during WW II died on August 24th. He was 77 years old.

Allen Hoskins, was Farina in "OUR GANG" comedies. He was 59 years old. He died on July 28th.

Duncan Renaldo, "THE CISCO KID" of Television fame and the second lead star of many Republic Serials of the 1940's, died last month. He was 76 years old.

### • COURT FIGHT AMONG KATE SMITH ALLIES •

Kate Smith's three caretakers will go to court to decide who will continue managing the famed singer's property. The three were appointed in 1979 by a New York judge who ruled Miss Smith's deteriorating condition made it impossible for her to continue to handle her own affairs. Miss Smith gained fame several decades ago with her performances on radio, Broadway and television. She is best known for her rendition of Irving Berlin's "God Bless America" which eventually became her theme song.

### • CLOSED-CIRCUIT RADIO STUDIO AT LIBRARY •

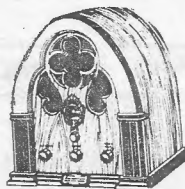
The BRRS provides in-depth news and other information to the blind and print-handicapped citizens of Maryland. The Center has a special BRRS receiver and headphones available on a walk-in basis. The service is on the air Monday through Friday, 7:30 A.M. and 3:30 through 9:00 P.M. This service is available at the Enoch Pratt Free Library's Center for the Visually and Hearing Impaired.

### • NOT AS GOOD, BUT... IT HELPS •

Head demagnetization is a necessity and if you do not have a head demagnetizer there is a quick and dirty way of almost accomplishing the same thing.

Place your recorder in the record position and simply pull the plug out of the wall and repeat this operation a few times.

It's not as good a method as using a head demagnetizer but it's a better method than doing nothing at all.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING ON RADIO

### THE LOCAL SCENE

WAYE-AM (86KW) Big Band Music from sunrise to sunset.

WBAL-AM (1090KW) Jay Grayson Daily, noon until 3:00 P.M.

WITH-AM (1230KW) Harley show, nightly, at 8:00 P.M. Great Jazz and Big Band music. A Baltimore institution.

WRBS-FM (95.1MHZ) Religious Drama, daily at 10:00 A.M. and 12:00 noon (Children's Show: "Ranger Bill").

WBJC-FM (91.5MHZ) NPR "Sounds Like Yesterday" Sunday at 9:00 P.M.

WCVT-FM (89.7MHZ) "The Import Show" with Dave Stevenson 1950's Rock and Roll music from Europe.

WMAR-FM (106.5MHZ) Good listenable music for your dinner hour and all through the night.

Washington, D.C.

WAMU-FM (88.5MHZ) "Recollections" with John Hickman, Sunday 9:30 P.M. "Escape" Sunday, 10:30 P.M. "Cavalcade of America" Sunday, 8:00 P.M.

Arlington, Va.

WTAM-AM 24 hour Big Band music, with their Morning show hosted by an old Baltimore favorite, radio pioneer and Golden Mike recipient, Al Ross.

### SOMETHING SPECIAL!

The John Hickman Christmas Eve "Recollections Show"

AMOS AND ANDY

DUFFY'S TAVERN

MORMAN TABERNACLE CHOIR

GUNSMOKE

MAYOR OF THE TOWN (with the traditional Christmas broadcast of "A CHRISTMAS CAROL" starring Lionel Barrymore.)

WGRB (NOSTALGIA BROADCASTING NETWORK):

A typical broadcast day from 6:00 A.M. to Midnight. A recreation of how it was during those Golden years of broadcasting, with news, weather, spot announcements and all of the favorite radio shows from Monday through Saturday. (Available from our lending library)

## • IMAGINATION, ENTHUSIASM...and MORE! •

By: Guest Editor  
Richard Owellen  
Broadcasting Institute of Md.

More enthusiasm and imagination-- that's it-- that's what we're learning as students at BIM. And we love it- even if we still do get surprised at times by Mr. Jeppi. Make a "small" or a "simple little" mistake, and-- WOW! But we couldn't learn any better any other way. I guess when you look at it, enthusiasm really speaks for itself, but imagination is something else. And it seems to be in some real trouble these days. What ever happened to vivid imagination? You know, the kind of original and imaginative thinking that brought to life famous stories like Captains Courageous, or the Lone Ranger, or even- yes, Donald Duck. Or even such tales of fantasy as the "Lord of the Rings". I think it might be a good idea if we all turned off our TV's for a while. Turn off the radio too? Maybe. But it might be a better idea to keep it on- if- if radio can be directed back into--- imagination! Oh! That magic word! How nice it would be to be able to use our imagination once again. Maybe I'm just nostalgic, but it sure was fun, and stimulating, to build my own mental picture of what Captain Midnight looked like. Or of Baby Snooks. Listening for the first time the other day to the classic broadcast "War of the Worlds", my mind rapidly developed a picture of the events- via my imagination-- that has left an impression more lasting than if I had seen it in visual form. Isn't that interesting? I really think that the human mind has fantastic potential and tremendous capabilities. And I also think that we ought to develop it, not put it to sleep. The key, of course, is to stimulate a man to use his imagination. I consider this the real challenge of modern radio. To once again stimulate American humanity, with programming that turns on a man's imagination. How? How to do that? How can we break through our modern complacency, our addiction to the boob tube? My friend, I leave that to your imagination.

## • MY FAVORITE RADIO PROGRAM •

If any member would like to submit an article to this column, but feels they can not put it into the proper words, don't let that stop you! Your editors have come up with a very good solution to that problem. Tape your article either on a cassette or a small reel or tape and mail it to us. We will then listen to it and edit and write it for you, with your name as a byline. Now how's that for class "A" service? So come on, now you people, I am sure you have some memories about Old-Time Radio tucked away in your "mind's eye". Maybe a favorite broadcast that you remember, or even the very first one that you can recall listening to, or even the first Big Band Remote you can remember dancing to. Whatever your memory was, send it to us so we can share it with other members of the Buffs. Just send it to "My Favorite Radio Memory", c/o "ON THE AIR", 3613 Chestnut Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21211. O.K. now. Who will be the first? Will it be you?

## • YO, HO, HO, AND A BOOTLEG BOTTLE! •

DATELINE: HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

Land pirates are plying one of the most profitable operations in the illegal sale of old radio shows to small radio stations. But after several years of investigation of this practice, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) is beginning to move in legal channels. They have uncovered catalogues with as many as 500 different radio shows that are being circulated to commercial stations nationally, and a task case in court is imminent.

Not only is the copyright law being violated, AFTRA members are also being denied their rightful fee. Once they (AFTRA) catch up with the source of the distribution where the shows are coming from, they will take action in the courts. AFTRA is led to believe that the old shows are either collectors items or taken off the air in some manner of recording illegally years ago during an actual broadcast. The AFTRA bylaws allow for only one broadcast and this ruling has been in effect since 1939. Beyond one use each performer is entitled to the payment of \$20.00 per show.

The policing of illegal sales by it's forty chapters around the country by AFTRA, has turned up several distributors, but the big mystery is where did the shows come from originally? There are some stations operating legally and compensating the performers, but the growing use of old shows such as FRED ALLAN, JACK BENNY, and FIBBER VEGGIE and MOLLIE is causing considerable concern. The going charge to stations is \$4.50 per show, per each half hour, which could entail two half hour shows. Never is one complete series sold, only individual episodes. The radio shows in those early days were held live until ABC introduced tape. Air checks recordings, transcriptions, and other technical means were used by the suppliers of the programs to the distributors, but who they are and where they came from is puzzling AFTRA. They are planning a test case in the courts on fraudulent mail practices. It has been proven that a distributor in Colorado who advertises as a non-profit company, operates on a profit basis. Other companies (known to AFTRA) were tracked down as selling programs to stations, but it is still a secret who supplies them (the companies) with the tapes. This is one of the knottiest problems faced by AFTRA since it's existence.

The great Tommy Dorsey Orchestra under the direction of Buddy Morrow, is coming to town. The date is Wednesday, November 26th. The dance will be held in the Francis Scott Key Ballroom of the Baltimore Hilton Hotel. Reservations are \$12.50 per person, and can be obtained by writing to radio station WAYE, 334 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Make your check payable to "Sounds Great Baltimore".

NOTE: Any one in the Hershey, Pennsylvania area who can pick up WITF-FM, Ernie Rethschulte would like to trade tapes with you. Ernie can be reached at P.O. Box 8564 Baltimore, Maryland 21234 or call him collect at Area code 301-661-5008.



## **A NEW SLANT ON THE COPYRIGHT LAW: A PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW \***

By: Rae Deo

To my way of thinking I am becoming a very well read person on the U.S. copyright law as it pertains to radio programming. My interpretations may not be correct and I solicit communications and comments on the subject to "ON THE AIR".

The copyright law protects an unpublished work for a period of 28 years renewable for an additional 28 year period upon submission of a copy of the work, proper registration and a fee payment. Now the work can be published, copied excerpted, etc. only with the permission of the copyright holder.

If the copyright holder had published his work before applying for the copyright, then upon publication he has lost his copyright. Common Law Copyright and his work is in public domain.

The catch, if there is a catch is; What is considered a publication to the public? It can be argued that material contained in a magazine such as "ON THE AIR" although published is still protected by common law copyright since it has not been released to the public at large but only to a minority of the population. This argument proceeds to the point that only a minor segment of the population is exposed to "ON THE AIR" and the availability of "ON THE AIR" is limited (is only available by subscription and not sold at newsstands etc.)

Thus, the courts point of view would be that material within "ON THE AIR" would be deemed as being completely covered by COMMON Law Copyright since it is still unpublished. Courts have also ruled in the past that the broadcasting of a radio show over the airwaves where millions of people listened or recorded it is also unpublished works in the sense THAT A RECORD or tape recording is not a publication, and the material is still protected under common law copyright as an unpublished work.

Quite possibly this decision would not be reached in this day and age even though precedence has been set.

Although Radio's Golden Age started in the late thirties, most of the programs were not copyrighted until the late 40's or early 50's. Copyrights were not allowed even years after a program had been on the air since legal precedence had determined that broadcasting was not a publication.

If there is a legal question to be answered, that question has to be this: Was the broadcasting of vintage radio programs from the Golden Era still a publication of material in this year of 1980? If not, then why all the bother over a small minority of the population who now listens to it? On the other hand if a court case decides that broadcasting was publication, then all programs prior to actual official registration in the copyright office of a series would be in the public domain. For instance if Fibber McGee and Mollie were on the air in 1939 and not copyrighted until 1943, then all programs broadcast between those years would be in the public domain while all programs broadcast after 1943 would be protected by copyright law.

Confusing? You bet! More like double protection. Even more incredible is the fact that common law unpublished copyright protection seems to exist even if the originator and,

## **A NEW SLANT ON THE COPYRIGHT LAW--Continued**

5.

in some cases, it's the writer, or the producer, or the director, etc. who doesn't even have any copies or access to his own unpublished work. Now today, while the originator seems to have double protection the performers have none, which is even more ridiculous. In radio the term "rerun" was not known. Cancellation and syndication were words not yet invented. Therefore residuals were never put forth into contracts and the performers have no status in the rebroadcasts of today. Residuals did not enter contracts until television came into it's own in 1952. Programs rebroadcast after that date owe performers residuals to the specific performers involved.

I hope this resume' clears up any doubts you may have had about the copyright law as it exists today. As I stated at the beginning of this article, after reading and research this is only one man's opinion and I invite comments. What's yours?

## **A NOTE OF THANKS \***

For the past several years the Golden Radio Buffs have been fortunate to have a gentleman act as newsletter editor who was one of our younger generation of radio buffs fortunate enough to "re-discover radio" when he joined our organization at the time of it's founding. His talent, his research, and his editing has been outstanding. We could not let him retire as our editor without thanking him for a job well done.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

## **A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE: "FROM ALL OF US, TO ALL OF YOU"**

Nine years have gone by since we started "ON THE AIR" and The Golden Radio Buffs of Maryland, Inc., and although there have been problems, we have all managed to publish an edition of our newsletter every other month. A few times we have been late but all in all everything worked out. We thank each and every one of you who have written to us with comments, articles, drawings and complaints.

Yes, the years have passed and quite rapidly at that. We now look forward to an even more enjoyable publication. How do we say "Thank you" for the kind of backing you have given us over the years? We have in our files many, many articles from Radio's Golden Age that will be appearing in future issues of this publication. This is our promise to you!

We hope we have served a purpose during our first 9 years, and the purposes we had in mind. From all of us here at "ON THE AIR", including Dave Stevenson and myself as well as our Board Members, we wish you the very merriest of Christmas' and the Happiest of New Years. Drive safely and enjoy yourself and we will be with you in January with Volume 9 of "ON THE AIR". Until then I remain,

Obediently yours,

Owens L. Pomeroy, and  
the "ON THE AIR" staff



# YESTERDAY'S RADIO LOGS

**FLASH!**

**AUNT JENNY IS HERE!**

ENJOY REAL LIFE STORIES NOW ON WIBX

YOU'LL welcome AUNT JENNY! Her kindly personality and true-to-life dramas make her program a daily "must" in millions of homes. Tune in today and you'll see why!

**11:45 A.M. MONDAY THRU FRIDAY**

SPONSORED BY NEW EASY-MIX **SPRY**

**PHILCO CORPORATION**

INVITES YOU TO LISTEN TO

**OUR SECRET WEAPON**

Hear Rex Stout Expose AXIS LIES!

**WIBX TONIGHT 7:15 P.M.**

**WOW!**

WAIT TILL YOU FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS!

★ **TONIGHT!**

**"That Brewster Boy"**

**WIBX 9:30**

SPONSORED BY MOTHER'S OATS

**TUNE IN TONIGHT**

**GEORGE BURNS AND GRACE ALLEN**

Those fugitives from a doft-board in "WELL, I SWAN" radio's loffiest show

PRESENTED BY LEVIN BROS. CO. MAKERS OF **SWAN** 4 SWELL SOAPS IN ONE!

**WIBX at 9:00 P. M.**

SALVAGE ALL YOUR TIN AND HELP UNCLE SAM TO WIN!

1/22/43 9/1/43

7/8/46

Tonight!

**DICK Powell**

**JOAN Bennett**

**"Murder My Sweet"**

**8:00 • WIBX**

Frigidaire Hollywood Star Time

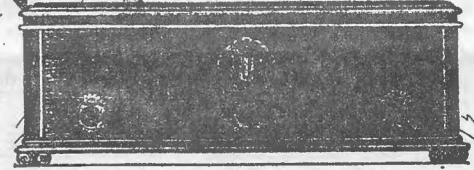
# ALLAN'S.... \*MEMORIBILIA MANOR\*

This is the first in a series of reproductions of classic ads, photographs, or articles from our archives.

The ad shown on this page came from the 1929 issue of National Geographic. It is for the RCA Radiola model "60". This radio is similar to the one donated by Jennie Lea and Aldine Byrd, who were formally Media columnist for the News American here in Baltimore. Of special interest in this ad is the fact that although the radio lists for a retail price of \$147.00, (1929 dollars that is.) The "Radiotrons" (Which were the tubes.) and the loud speaker were extras and not included in the base price of the radio. If you look at the very bottom of the ad in the lower right hand corner you will see that they do at least tell you what the cost of the speaker will be. (\$88.00) How many ads do you see in the newspapers today do that? Absolutely none!

See you next issue;  
Allen Caplan,  
Memoribilia Chairman

## RCA RADIOLA 60 SUPER-HETERODYNE

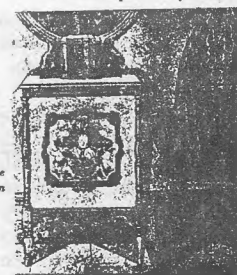
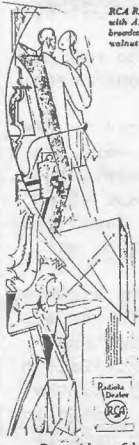


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# RADIO... AS RADIO USED TO BE

THE WONDROUS WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE  
BALLROOM

by: Owens Pomeroy

From the earliest days of radio there were disk jockeys, but the craft was lifted to its apogee by Martin Block, a refugee from the New York City streets where for a time he was in business with a suitcase full of razor blades and other notions. He found his destiny at WNEW (AM) New York, and independent station striving for attention in the very fountainhead of big-time network radio. WNEW was then managed by one of the shrewdest women in radio, Bernice Judis.

The two were made for each other, as became evident in a recent recollection by Miss Judis of the great event. "Martin Block came in to see me one day for an audition. He was just a radio bum." She said with an indulgent sign.

"He said: You're having trouble with your music, I have some ideas'."

The ideas included a program format called THE MAKE-BELIEVE BALLROOM with Martin Block as the master of ceremonies that only a pitchman could describe with a straight face. He wanted Miss Judis to believe he was presiding in a huge hall containing a revolving stage on which were arrayed the most popular musical groups in the country. At Martin Block's command Tommy Dorsey would come and go, Benny Goodman would induce his pack to full cry and then yield to Artie Shaw who, obedient to the master of the ballroom if to no other force on earth, would stride up "Begin the Beguine" and then fade away to a commercial.

The sheer gall of Mr. Block's presentation delivered in a voice that dripped with pure honey commended him to the manager of WNEW. He was signed to a contract at \$25.00 a week. At the time neither mentioned and Martin Block forever swore he never knew that "The Make-Believe Ballroom" was the earlier invention of a Los Angeles disk jockey, Al Jarvis.

The years of Martin Block were happy years at WNEW, which became the most profitable independent in the nation.

"Block was so brilliant," Miss Judis recalls. "He didn't get up and sell. I remember something called Madison Personal Loan. He wouldn't tell listeners to go and get a loan. He'd say: 'When you're home and the doorbell rings, don't peek through it to see who it is. Don't be afraid. If you think it's a creditor, go to Madison Personal Loan. Then you can go to the door, fling it open and say: 'Hello whomever you are.'"

Grammar would only have encumbered a man with so deep a feeling for the human condition. "In six months," Miss Judis recalls, getting to the essentials of the history, "Martin Block was making \$300.00 a week. Toward the end he was making \$2,000,000 a year. One year he made \$300,000."

What was the real magic of Martin Block?

"He had sex in his voice", says Miss Judis. "And he lied".

# RE-CORDially YOURS

By: Guy Travers



"REBIRTH OF A SOUND!" - thus runs the headline of a recent article, in which former (and current) big band leader, Ray Anthony, speaks out on the return of the great music of the big band era - and radio's golden age. When you talk of that fabulous period, it is generally conceded that you are referring, roughly, to the years: 1935-45. And, when you start to enumerate your favorites, the list is pretty sure to include such giants as: Miller, Goodman, Dorsey, Ellington, Shaw, James, et al. We must admit that our own memory of that era seems to hold up pretty well, considering the number of intervening years. Not only did we live right in the middle of this period, but we were privileged to succeed Garry Moore as radio/record columnist at Baltimore City College in 1934, just as this era was getting underway. Each week, we tagged our column with a few mini-record reviews, even though the disc business had hit an all-time low for home consumption, with the bulk of the sales being confined to radio stations and juke box operators. Fortunately, a new label - DECCA - arrived on the scene in 1934 - offering all the top tunes AND the top stars at one half the prevailing price of seventy-five cents, or three for a dollar! Shortly after this, all the major labels had to bolster and promote their own "budget" labels, such as BLUEBIRD, OKTH, HARMONY, VOCALION, etc. - much to the benefit of the record buying public. Thus, along came the sounds of Miller, Shaw, Shep Fields, Freddy Martin, Ozzie Nelson, - to mention just a few - suddenly available at a more affordable price. So, this was a most happy time, indeed! Not only were we able to enjoy regularly all the great sounds purveyed by so many talented musicians and singers - on records - and via the airwaves, but it wasn't too long before we returned, personally, to local microphones as a member of the WCAO announcing staff - (we had gotten our first taste of radio at the same mikes back in 1930 -on Uncle Ed's Children's Hour.) With WCAO's basic affiliation with CBS, we were able to air many of the country's top music makers, and also, to meet quite a few over those years: Ray Noble, Glenn Miller, Ben Bernie, Wayne King, Tommy Dorsey, to mention a few.

One final note: We thoroughly enjoyed our recent visit to the WBAL studios and the Alan Christian Show, along with Ollie Brauer and members of the Baltimore Vintage Record Club - the organization which sponsored a live "Big Band Concert" at Hopkins last month, and will join the Buffs in co-sponsoring a Christmas Dance, coming December 20th.

Because of so many special articles in this Christmas edition of ON THE AIR, two of our regular columns have been omitted. "The Puzzle Page," - and "Personality Profile" will again resume on a regular basis in our Jan. issue.

Ed.

8.

**AN  
AFFECTIONATE  
LOOK  
AT THE  
MOVIE  
SERIALS**  
by  
**Dave  
Stevenson**



The transition period from silent to sound films in the late 20's and early 30's would prove to be a real test for the serial. Dozens of studios had turned out silent serials. Now, in the early sound period, only Universal and Mascot were left. Universal entered the sound serial market in 1929 with *Ace of Scotland Yard* the first talking serial. A 10 episode mystery-adventure effort, the story concerned the villainous Queen of Diamonds and her plans to steal the legendary Love Ring of Babylon from Lord Blanton (Herbert Prior) and his daughter, Lady Diana (Florence Allen). She is thwarted in her evil quest by our stalwart hero, Inspector Blake of Scotland Yard (Crawford Kent). It must be understood that while some dialogue, music and sound effects were incorporated in the production of this serial, it was not the first all-talking serial. That distinction belongs to a Western, *The Indians Are Coming* (Universal, 1930). The film featured Western star Tim McCoy and dealt with Indian uprisings and the efforts of the chief antagonist, Rance Carter (Francis Ford) to marry Tim's niece, who has just discovered gold on her property. Mascot's serials had one formula: use fairly well known actors in action-packed adventures. One of their biggest "drawn" was a young actor who had started his career with the unlikely name of Marion Michael Morrison but soon had it changed to John Wayne. Wayne had already appeared in 15 features, including *The Big Trail*, when he was cast as the hero in the 1932 Mascot serial, *The Shadow of the Eagle*. In it, he portrayed Craig McCoy, a carnival skywriter in pursuit of the mysterious Eagle. In *The Hurricane Express*, (Mascot, 1932) Wayne portrays an air transport pilot hot on the heels of *The Wrecker*, a master of disguise responsible for his father's death and a series of devastating train wrecks. Finally, Wayne appeared in his last serial, *The 3 Musketeers*, for Mascot in 1933. The chapter-play was loosely based on the famous story by Alexander Dumas and starred Jack Mulhall, Raymond Hatton and Francis X. Bushman, Jr. as three modern day French Legionnaires. The D'artagan role was changed to that of a young American aviator, played by Wayne. These four comrades fought together to rid the desert of El Shaitan, the Desert Devil and his evil Devil's Circle sect, whose main objective was the destruction of the Foreign Legion. After escaping certain death through 12 episodes, "The Duke" unmasks the villain and restores peace to the desert.

# BACKSTAGE

## In Broadcasting

By: Rae Deo

**DATELINE: OCT. 30, 1941: ORSON'S TROUBLES.**

Target for nation criticism for his broadcast, "HIS HONOR THE MAYOR" the April 6th program of "THE FREE COUNTRY" series, is young Orson Welles- playwright-actor-director. Welles is again the storm center of Hollywood. A check of the script as communistic by patriotic organizations, reveals that Welles cited the Bill of Rights from the Constitution of the United States almost verbatim during the ~~airing~~ of the broadcast under fire.... Further investigation of draft-dodging accusations hurled at Welles showed he was registered #1,027 at his local draft board. He filled out his questionnaire and received an extension to April 30th before being subject to call. Meanwhile the current series of "THE FREE COUNTRY" is scheduled to fade from the network on May 4th, according to an announcement given this reporter by CBS.

**UPDATE: DATELINE-NOV. 1980. CHICAGO THEATRE OF THE AIR RETURNS TO THE AIRWAVES.**

Although high quality radio productions have been scarce from the sixties on, there have been a few of outstanding quality. Elliott Lewis' "ZERO HOUR" (Now known as the MUTUAL RADIO THEATRE and heard over KQED in Los Angeles, California in the U.S. and over CBN in Tronto, Canada.) and Hyman Brown's "CBS RADIO MYSTERY THEATRE" along with SEARS RADIO THEATRE. We can probably assume that radio drama, even on a small scale such as this will not die out... Some very exciting news to reach this reporter's desk and which I now pass along to the readers of this column is that currently WFMT, Chicago's Fine Arts station presents monthly the "CHICAGO THEATRE OF THE AIR", produced by the ALL MEDIA DRAMATIC WORKSHOP. They are heard on Tuesday at 10:30 P.M. once a month. James Earl Jones portrayed "EMPEROR JONES" in the play by Eugene O'Neil heard last December. Although Jones did the role twice before, on the stage, this was his first time on radio. Yuri Rasarsky adapted, produced, and directed the radio production. The taping session lasted 12 hours. If any member living in the Chicago area has heard this new radio series and has air-checked any of them, they would be a welcomed addition to our library. Just send a copy to our librarian, Ted Grzymala so they can be listed in our library directory..... More next issue.

Thirty.

A new and updated edition of both our Club Directory and our Tape Library will be coming your way with our next edition. If you are missing any Library pages up to page #36 or you do not have a club directory, call 288-5848 (our newsletter phone) or write to your editor c/o this newsletter.

Ed.

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